YOUR
FREE GUIDE
TO MAY & JUNE '89

THE
TRIANGLE
CINEMA

Parents

DAVID MAMET SEASON

New French films ● Camille Claudel ● Chocolat ● + Torch Song Trilogy ● Crossing Delancey ● Patty Hearst ● Crazy Love

The Triangle Cinema

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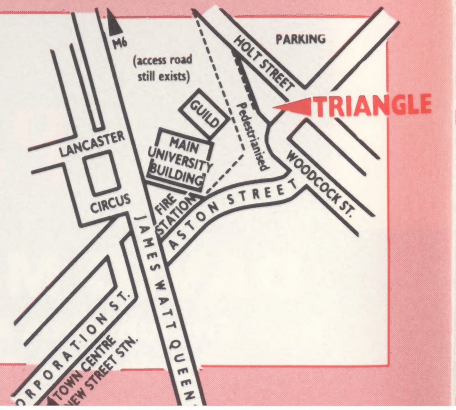


MAIN FILMS

VIRGIN

French Films

We begin a season of French films in this programme with a series of recent releases, including Virgin, Camille Claudel, Kamikaze, Chocolat and Le Grand Chemin. The season will continue in the next programme with further new titles plus a retrospective section.

Virgin (36 fillette) (18)

May 1-3 (See Calendar for times)

The subject of adolescence has long been a popular one with French film-makers, but Catherine Breillat's disturbing yet compelling *36 fillette* (the title refers to a size of garment for young girls) breaks with tradition in a number of ways. To begin with, it studiously avoids sentimentality and rejects even that quality of tenderness associated with the lyricism of much French cinema. Instead, Breillat's detached, unflinching camera aims to capture the confusions, awkwardness and contradictions which appear to be unavoidable features of that painful transitional phase of life between childhood and adulthood. Much of the trouble arises, of course, from a burgeoning sexuality, which Breillat's young female protagonist has discovered and is trying to negotiate as best she can.

Fourteen-year-old Lili (Delphine Zentout) is bored with the holiday she shares with her parents and older brother at a camping site near Biarritz. Hitching a lift into town one night to visit a disco, she strikes up a relationship of sorts with forty-year-old Maurice (Etienne Chicot). Although seemingly determined to loose her virginity, Lili is so unpredictable in her behaviour that the lecherous Maurice becomes confused and dispirited by their on/off affair. When Lili's parents learn about the relationship, her father reacts first with violence and then with sympathy when he discovers that his daughter is in fact still a virgin. Having learned something from her experiments, and rejecting the advice given by a female acquaintance, Lili finally achieves her goal on her own terms by sleeping with a boy for whom she has little regard.

A young girl's sexual awakening is familiar and easily exploitable material for a film, but Breillat manages to avoid most of the pitfalls. One of her strategies is to adopt a plain, realistic style

of a kind that's unusual in French cinema but has a lot in common with the work of Maurice Pialat (with whom Breillat worked on *Police*). This approach doesn't make for very sympathetic characters, but it does have the advantage of establishing a strong sense of authenticity. It also proves to be a most effective means of portraying the film-makers interest in what she describes as 'feelings such as unease, confusion, shame, self-destruction, sado-masochism'. In *36 fillette*, such concerns find brilliant expression in the extended and painful scene of Maurice's attempted seduction of Lili in his hotel room. The scene lasts for eleven-and-a-half minutes and, as one critic noted, 'the atmosphere of emotional chaos, the levels of tension and apprehension between the couple, makes for rapt but uneasy viewing'.

Director: Catherine Breillat. France, 1988.
Starring: Delphine Zentout, Etienne Chocot.
Colour. Subtitles. 88 mins.

Things Change (PG)

May 5-10, 12-17

See David Mamet season for notes.

Patty Hearst (18)

May 12-17 (See Calendar for times)

The incredible story of Patricia Hearst became one of the great media events of the '70s, her transformation from heiress to gun-toting guerilla creating seven cover stories in *Newsweek* alone. The granddaughter of William Randolph Hearst (the powerful newspaper tycoon said to have inspired Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*), she was kidnapped in 1974 by the Symbionese Liberation Army, one of those bizarre radical groups of the period who adopted terrorist tactics in the cause of a 'revolutionary' struggle against the American system. This was the time of the Black Panthers, when the political methods of the '60s counter-culture had given way to more desperate measures. But the dozen or so hardcore members of the SLA were mostly white middle-class kids who tried to attach themselves to various causes by embarking on a few ill-conceived escapades. Their motive for abducting Patty Hearst was apparently to negotiate the release of two of their imprisoned colleagues. But their initial, wholly impractical demand was for an act of 'good faith' whereby the Hearst family would distribute seventy-million dollars worth of food to the needy. A

PATTY HEARST

small, chaotic programme of food distribution was initiated, but the group made no further demands. Instead, there was the revelation of a tape in which Patty said she had joined the group. The news appeared to be confirmed when she was photographed with SLA members robbing a bank, and the cover of *Newsweek* now featured her wearing a beret and jumpsuit, machine-gun in hand. Branded a 'common criminal', she was eventually arrested and sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

Released from jail by President Carter in '79 after serving two years, Hearst published an account of her experiences in *Every Secret Thing*. Paul Schrader's film is based on this book and tells Hearst's story entirely from her point of view. Schrader has said that what attracted him to the project was 'the opportunity to get into a state of mind'. In his previous work as writer (*Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*) and director (*American Gigolo*, *Mishima*), Schrader has presented his stories through the subjective eyes of his protagonists, conjuring up disturbing visions of mental and physical extremes. The same is true of *Patty Hearst*, even though the film is obliged to play by some of the rules of the docu-drama. Schrader has in fact adopted three styles to cover Hearst's different experiences and gradual metamorphosis. The horrors of incarceration and interrogation—she's blindfolded, kept in a closet and sexually abused—are presented through heavily stylised photography and sets. A more realistic style characterises the central section of the film, which shows how Patty gets caught up in the guerrilla operations of the SLA. This is followed, in the film's third act, by the confusions and unreality of the courtroom and jail sequences.

'The Patty Hearst kidnapping had an unreal quality', says Schrader. 'One would follow the case in the newspapers, watch it on TV, think about it—only to wake and discover that what you had been dreaming about had actually occurred: the heiress had joined her captors, become a revolutionary, robbed a bank'. She was, in other words, very much like a character out of a Paul Schrader movie.

Director: Paul Schrader. U.S.A./G.B., 1988.
Starring: Natasha Richardson, William Forsythe.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 104 mins.

Camille Claudel (PG)

May 18-28 (See Calendar for times)

Camille Claudel tells the story of the tortured relationship between the little-known sculptress and the great sculptor Auguste Rodin—a turbulent affair riven with passion, jealousy and bitterness. When Camille (Isabelle Adjani) travelled to Paris from the provinces in the 1880s she was not yet twenty but already displayed evidence of an extraordinary talent. That talent was recognised immediately by Rodin (Gérard Depardieu), who enrolled her first as pupil and then as lover when he was on the point of achieving international fame. By the end of their liaison, fifteen years later, he was established as the foremost sculptor of his time. Some of his masterpieces has been inspired by Camille; but, obscured by his shadow, she became an embittered recluse, creating sculpture obsessively (and destroying most of it immediately), writing angry, reproachful letters to Rodin and her once close brother, Paul Claudel, the Catholic poet and diplomat. Shortly before the Great War her family engineered her committal to a mental asylum where she was to spend the rest of her remaining thirty years of life.

Camille Claudel is the first feature directed by Bruno Nuytten, one of the most distinguished cinematographers of the new French cinema and whose credits include *Jean de Florette* and *Manon des sources*. But equal creative honours belong to Isabelle Adjani, for whom the project has been a kind of crusade for several years. It was Adjani who secured from the Claudel family exclusive rights to portray Camille on film. She was also instrumental in raising the film's 16 million dollar budget and in persuading Gérard Depardieu to play Rodin. The Best Actress award to Adjani at the Berlin Film Festival recognised the strength and intensity of her performance in a demanding role. Her Camille is a wilfully demanding personality, wildly jealous of her lover's persistent infidelities and increasingly frustrated at her lack of recognition.

Director: Bruno Nuytten. France, 1988.
Starring: Isabelle Adjani, Gérard Depardieu.
Colour. Panavision. Dolby Stereo. 174 mins.

CAMILLE CLAUDEL

CRAZY LOVE

Crazy Love (18)

May 26-31 (See Calendar for times)

This début Belgian feature from director Dominique Deruddere so impressed Francis Coppola and his crew that DD was whisked out to work with them at short notice soon after its Belgian release. And, without wanting to hype it, it's easy to see why Charles Bukowski so loves this screen interpretation of his work. The linking of three Bukowski short stories shows one boy/youth/man's progression from carefree, fairy-tale pre-pubescence through a sexual education which starts conventionally, and wittily enough but which is derailed in the second episode by the development of the most heart-rendingly grotesque case of acne. Josse de Pauw, as the older Harry Voss, proves a startlingly good actor who must be destined for a wider audience, leading us gently and sadly from the standpoint of the youth's growing alienation from love and women, down a strange path to an awful place typically reeking of Bukowskian angst, spunk, death, booze and loneliness. Norra lorra laffs? Untrue. The film is mordantly funny, stunningly designed, exquisitely photographed, quirkily directed and all too brief. The director knows how to tell a story. Bizarre and beautiful.—*Tim Clark*/Time Out.

Director: Dominique Deruddere. Belgium, 1987.
Starring: Josse De Pauw, Geert Hunaerts.
Colour. Subtitles. 87 mins.

Torch Song Trilogy (15)

May 26-June 8 (See Calendar for times)

Considered one of the major American theatrical events of the '80s, Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song Trilogy* has now been adapted for the screen by the author, who also appears as Arnold Beckoff, a flamboyant drag queen looking for love and respect.

'Originated as separately staged one acts, the play, when finally mounted as a unified work in 1982, proved bracing in its frank depiction of gay sex life, both promiscuous and committed, and won over even the blue-rinse matinee ladies with its riotous humour and warm presentation of familiar family problems...

'Highly theatrical as a live show, *Torch Song* retains heavy vestiges of its origins. After a prologue showing Brooklyn boy Arnold trying on his mother's clothes and makeup, the film introduces the grownup version in his dressing room at his drag club, ruminating directly to the camera about life and love. 'Nervous, mannered, gravelly voiced, overly sensitive, campy and with a taste for eyerolling rivalled only by Graucho Marx in modern showbiz annals, Arnold appears a bit gun-shy of romance, but allows himself to be picked up in a gay bar by Ed (Brian Kerwin), a good-looking, straight-seeming fellow who openly announces his bisexuality. 'This doesn't stop Arnold from falling head over heels for his Middle American catch, but causes him endless pain when he discovers Ed with a young woman, Laurel (Karen Young). Forever fretting and panicking about every twist and turn in his life, Arnold cannot fathom this perceived betrayal and goes into a prolonged funk.

'In what is effectively Act Two, Arnold meets Alan (Matthew Broderick), to him an impossibly good-looking kid who used to be a hustler and actively seeks out Arnold for his human, as opposed to superficial, qualities. Alan is clearly in love with Arnold's life, although classic sex farce complications intervene when Ed and Laurel invite them to their country farm for the weekend and Ed and Alan head off to the barn together.

'Alan meets a tragic, poignant end, and Act Three, the most conventional of the sections, is given over to Arnold's efforts to handle an adopted teenage son and sort out his strained relations with his mother (Anne Bancroft)...
'Sounding like Popeye when he sings, Fierstein wins one over through sheer force of personality, although he does get carried away at times. Bancroft goes through the roof with her typical

SALAAM BOMBAY!

TORCH SONG TRILOGY

and/or definitive Jewish mother turn, flailing away and yelling at deafening volume. Kerwin is fine as the simple, sometimes oafish heart-throb, and Broderick, who played the adopted adolescent on stage, makes a good stab at playing the aggressively gay mate with results that are often appealing...'—*Variety*.

Director: Paul Bogart. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Anne Bancroft, Matthew Broderick, Harvey Fierstein.
Colour. 117 mins.

Salaam Bombay! (15)

June 9-14 (See Calendar for times)

Mira Nair's justly celebrated film provides an unflinching account of street life in Bombay and represents a refreshing departure from the studio-bound artificiality of mainstream Indian cinema. Nair's background in documentaries is evident from her excellent use of locations, and the non-professional cast members of *Salaam Bombay!* were drawn from the reform institutions, streets and jails of the city. The film's vivid portrait of low life is seen chiefly through the eyes of ten-year-old Krisha, who is abandoned by a travelling circus and makes his way to Bombay in the hope of earning some money to take back to his mother in the village he left behind. Once in the city he begins to work at the bottom of the street hierarchy as a *chaipau* or teaboy, and his delivery rounds bring him into contact with an underworld of prostitution and drug-trafficking. Krisha's progress through this world of exploita-

tion is charted by Nair with an admirable lack of indignation or sentimentality. Like its characters, the film refuses to give in to despair.

Director: Mira Nair. India/France/G.B., 1988.
Starring: Shafiq Syed. Raghubir Yadav.
Colour. Subtitles. 114 mins.

Kamikaze (15)

June 9-15 (See Calendar for times)

This Luc Besson production was developed after the success of *Subway* and given to his assistant, Didier Grousset, to direct. Although not quite as spectacular or dynamic as *Subway*, it bears all the familiar Besson trademarks: carefully composed wide-screen visuals (CinemaScope is Besson's favourite format), a catchy score by Éric Serra, loud Dolby sound effects, a cast of wildly eccentric characters, and an impish sense of humour. But the main attraction of *Kamikaze* is its wonderful premise that a method could be devised for striking back at people on television from the comfort of one's own living room. It's an irresistible proposition, with the potential of making criminals of us all. As the police inspector concludes after the first on-air killing in *Kamikaze*, 'I've got fifty-five million suspects'.

The man behind this lethal invention is disgruntled scientist Albert (Michel Galabru, who has been overdosing on TV since his dismissal from a top job in electronics. Now mentally deranged, Albert decides to hit back at the people who dispensed with his services by zapping the TV presenters he despises. The subsequent mysterious killings on live TV are investigated by a detective who discovers Albert's bizarre method of murder and assembles a team of electronics experts to develop a counter weapon. Armed with this device, and using a suitable TV personality as bait on a special live transmission, the detective sets up a duel of the airwaves in which he hopes to beat Albert to the draw and fire back along his line of transmission.

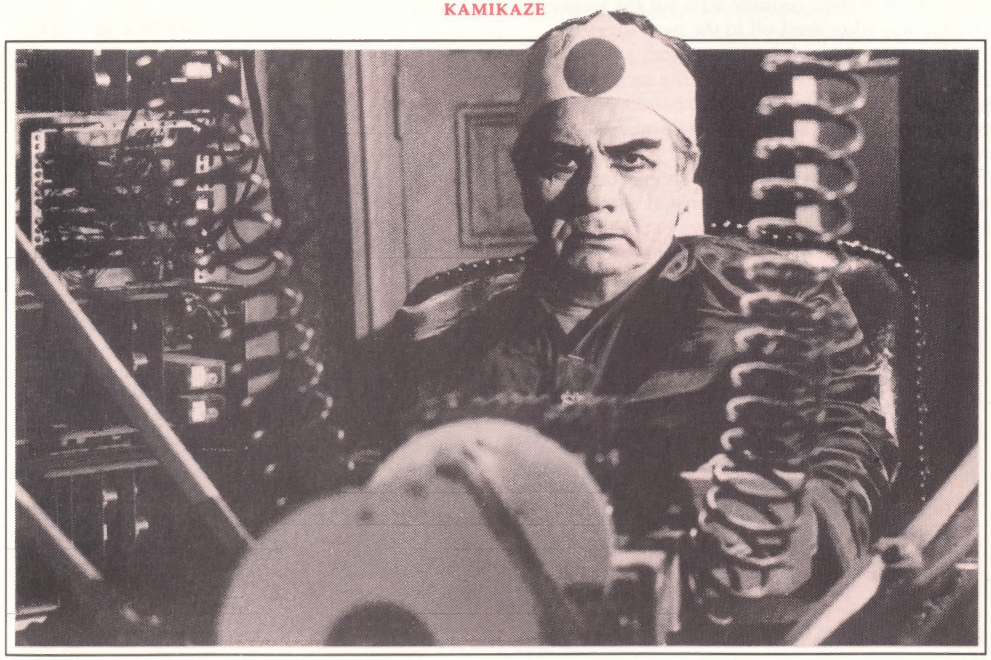
Director: Didier Grousset. France, 1986.
Starring: Richard Bohringer, Michel Galabru.
Colour. Panavision (Scope). Dolby Stereo. Subtitles. 89 mins.

Crossing Delancey (PG)

June 16-29 (See Calendar for times)

Joan Micklin Silver's first film in many years—she made *Hester Street* and *Between the Lines*—was a surprise hit in America last year and has brought a great deal of praise to Amy Irving for her performance in the lead role., She plays Izzy Grossman, a 32-year-old book-store manager whose overbearing Jewish grandmother engages the services of a matchmaker to find her granddaughter a husband. The matchmaker (Sylvia Miles) brings Izzy together with an unlikely candidate in the form of Sam Posner (Peter Riegert, from *Local Hero*), who runs a pickle business. Sam turns out to be handsome and true, but Izzy claims to be happy enough as a single woman who's got loyal friends, strong literary interests, and an agreeable casual lover.

KAMIKAZE



CROSSING DELANCEY

'*Crossing Delancey* is one of a growing number of recent films that posit an apparently strong and successful single working woman, only to have her question the very nature of her independence. In a script cannily adapted from her own play, Susan Sandler pulls off some romantic coups in notably sophisticated style, and makes palatable, even enjoyable, a film whose sentiments are governed by a nostalgic yearning for simpler times. Sandler and Joan Micklin Silver peel away the supposed romance of making it in the big city—Izzy signally fails to convince her grandmother of the reality of her success, or the viability of her high-flying life style, and the film also makes it impossible for us to believe in it. Underneath, a more real romance is revealed, that of history, roots and marrying the metaphorical boy-next-door.'—*Verina Glaessner*/Monthly Film Bulletin.

Director: Joan Micklin Silver. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Amy Irving, Peter Riegert, Jeroen Krabbe.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 97 mins.

Parents (18)

June 21-25 (See Calendar for times)

Set in a small town Indiana suburb reminiscent of David Lynch's *Blue Velvet*, Bob Balaban's excellent début feature employs a similar blend of black humour and disturbing psychodrama. Randy Quaid and Mary Beth Hurt play Nick and Lily Laemle, a young married couple whose dedication to self betterment, domestic order and keeping up appearances amounts to an obsession. Shot in vibrant colours and from bizarre angles, their squeaky clean Space Age home epitomises this antiseptic respectability. Dad has a good job at the local Toxico factory, where he is developing a prototype defoliant, and Mum is blissfully happy in her role as obedient wife and caring mother. The only thing out of place in their subur-

PARENTS

ban show home is their sensitive young son, Michael (Madorsky), whose disturbing nightmares hint at the darker forces seething beneath its spotless surfaces.

Michael's dreams are filled with swarming images of blood, and when his teacher asks him to draw a picture of his parents, he scrawls all over the figures with red crayon. The school's chain-smoking social worker Millie Dew (played with bedraggled charm by Sandy Dennis) fails to delve into the recesses of Michael's disturbed mind and his parents politely gloss over the matter. But questions remain unanswered. Why is Michael's father so protective of his wine cellar? Why do his meat-loving parents have such an appetite for barbecued steaks and bloody offal? Is it simply Michael's over-active imagination, or does some sinister secret lurk beneath the polite veneer of his parents' lives?

Seen from a child's eye view, Babalan's striking visuals create a sense of cumulative unease, while Christopher Hawthorne's nicely judged script is filled with cryptic, unsettling dialogue. When Michael asks, 'What were these left-overs before they were left-overs?', his father replies patiently, 'Left-overs to be'. Anyone who recalls that unnerving sense of being excluded from the mysteries of the adult world will sympathise with Michael's view of this bizarre normality. And while the film's debt to *Eraserhead* and *Blue Velvet* is obvious—especially in the slow motion sequences and flowing camera movements through the house's heating ducts—Babalan's visually arresting film has a flavour all its own.—*Nigel Floyd*.

Director: Bob Babalan. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, Sandy Dennis.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 85 mins

Chocolat (15)

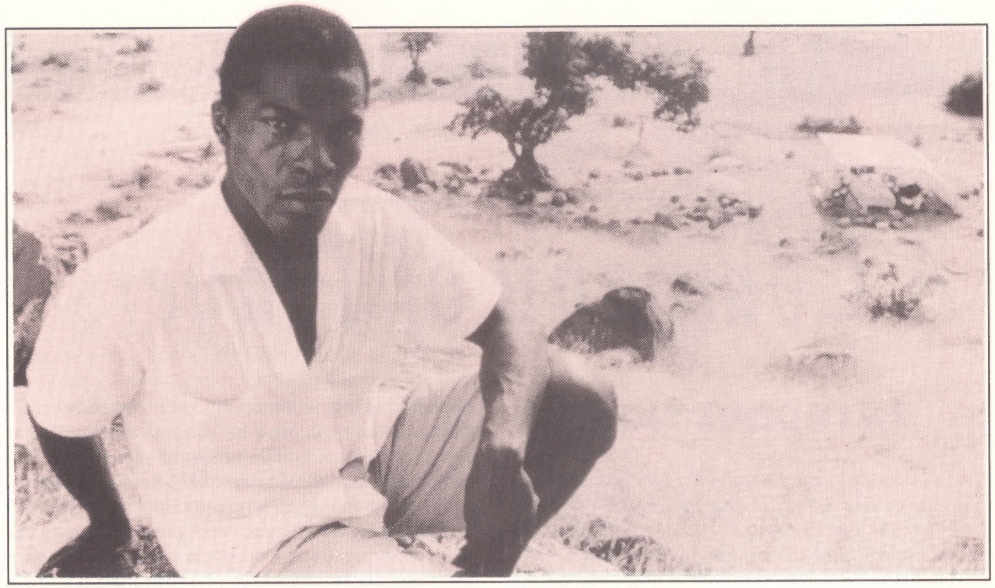
June 23-29 (See Calendar for times)

In this remarkably elegant first feature, Claire Denis—who has worked with Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders and Jacques Rivette—creates a vision of colonial Africa with a subtlety and economy lacking both in mainstream movies of the *White Mischief* kind and, perhaps, in the driving concerns of a film like *A World Apart*. Like that film, *Chocolat* tells its story through the eyes of a young white girl; in this case, however, the sense of memory, even nostalgia, is bound into the frame of the film itself as France, now adult, returns to visit the remote Cameroons villa where she grew up under her father's colonial administration. On the way she is offered a lift by a black American and his young son; the film begins with their meeting and ends with their parting, and so forces its central events of the past—France's recollections during the car journey—into the context of the present.

This series of memories—which are detailed and distinct yet strangely floating in time—builds up a picture of a colonialism at once rigid and fragile. France's father is the archetypically paternalistic *commissaire*: 'just', polite to his servants, but nevertheless an instrument of fundamental injustice. In his absence, his young wife Aimée tries to wield authority but is—the colonial paradox—completely dependent on her black household, particularly the house servant Protée. Wound through the film like a spring is the sense of sexual tension between him—young, strong and handsome—and Aimée, who can combine desire and authority in ordering him to help her with the zip of her ball dress.

Unusually for a film of this kind, we are shown the painfully claustrophobic situation through his eyes as much as hers. When a plane crashes near the villa we are introduced to a set of characters who epitomise the range of white attitudes to Africa, from the fear and disgust of a young white couple on their first trip, to the defrocked priest Luc, who likes to 'go native'. The white women are impressed, but Protée is not, and refuses to let Luc use the blacks' shower. When Luc taunts him about Aimée and they fight, she finally makes a tentative pass at him, which he must also refuse.

This lack of any option for Protée besides obedience and refusal is the political heart of the film; at the same time, the vivid suggestion of whiteness as 'unnatural, something close to death' as



CHOCOLAT

one character says, underlines the constantly yearning sense of white desire for the powerful otherness of black. The film opens with the black American and his son lying, lapped by waves, on an empty beach; an image of autonomous sensuality. As the film cuts to France, watching, we realise that we've been sharing her gaze, her desire. At the end of their journey, the American turns down her suggestion of a drink; there is still no easy point for them to meet, and reading her palms he sees for her 'no past, no present, no future'. The whole film is—in a sense—about the impossibility of a space for any real relationship between black and white in Africa. It closes, as it began, with some black men on their own, the camera slowly moving in to cut out France's look until we see them as autonomous, separate. Part of the film's skill and achievement is in finding such visual means to present its harsh emotional complexities, so that we are made to think simply by watching.—*Judith Williamson*.

Director: Claire Denis. France, 1988.
Starring: Isaach de Bankoté, Giúlia Boschi.
Colour. Subtitles. 105 mins.

Le Grand Chemin (15)

June 30 (6.15 & 8.30 p.m.)

Ronans is a small, isolated village in Brittany. In 1959 Louis, a delicate and sensitive nine-year-old Parisian boy, is left there by his mother (herself pregnant and separated from her husband) in the care of Marcelle, her childhood friend.

Based on director Jean-Loup Hubert's own childhood memories, Le Grand Chemin is the story of a boy left alone in a strange new world, with a couple whose childless marriage causes him to become the object of passions that nearly lead to tragedy. The film has a won a large number of awards in France, all richly merited—especially the César for Richard Bohringer as Pélo.

Director: Jean-Loup Hubert. France, 1987.
Starring: Anemone, Richard Bohringer.
Colour. Subtitles. 107 mins.

LE GRAND CHEMIN

TRIANGLE SEASON

DAVID MAMET

A Company of Players

INTRODUCTION

It's not commonly the lot of playwrights to make the transition to screenwriting and then, in rare instances, to directing without a certain amount of discomfort in their new abode. But apart from some complaints over rewrites he was asked for on *The Untouchables* (though he still refers to director Brian De Palma and producer Art Linson as friends), David Mamet has turned out three screenplays for other directors, and now directed two films from his own scripts, as if he had never left home. In one sense, actually, he hasn't, because he has carried a team of actors and technicians with him from one medium to the other. On *House of Games*, 'I had worked with the five principal players an average of eleven and a half years apiece, I had worked with the two designers for ten years, and with the composer since we were kids in high school'. Mamet is not, contrawise, a great believer in film as a collaborative art: 'Film is produced under the most stringent and detailed conditions of hierarchy, as we know'. But what can be produced, he feels, when energy and creativity is not dissipated in ego contests, the internecine battles of trust, respect and control, is work 'in a legitimate enterprise as part of a legitimate industry'.

It's a telling phrase, because precisely the opposite supplies the drive and subject matter of Mamet's work in theatre and film. This is a world of shysters and con men, gangsters and psychologists all—anyone whose living is dependent on picking up clues to what the other fellow is thinking, and then turning it to advantage—a world where there's little trust and respect. Perhaps it's the community of his fellow workers that allows Mamet to explore this 'other' world with such a clear view of its treacherousness, such a keen ear for its secret codes. From Mamet's own account of his upbringing, 'community' was certainly something that was lacking in life and that had to be sought out in art. 'The obsessive search for success and individuality has lead to the abandonment of a sense of community and collective social goals. My parents were not at all interested in preserving their European heritage and were enthusiastic in their complete dedication to the materialist values of American society... The discovery of a wonderful tradition of Midwestern writers such as Frank Norris, Willa Cather and especially Theodore Dreiser, from whose work I hope shortly to draw a serial, made me feel that perhaps I could eventually belong to a gang that carried pens and pencils instead of knives and chains' (*Sight and Sound*, Autumn 1988).

It is, of course, too early yet to say what kind of film-maker Mamet might turn out to be, what themes or vision of community might emerge from the sharply delineated behaviour, the undeniably sharp and entertaining practices of his characters. He has talked, uncharacteristically grandly, of people 'trapped in the destructive folds of the public myths of my country', and has been compared to playwrights as diverse as Arthur Miller and Sam Shepard. One would say, as a writer on the Great American Theme of the destructive pursuit of happiness and success, that he is not as didactic as the former and not as allegorical-absurd as the latter. So far he has made one clear and confident statement, *House of Games*, on some fairly knotty transactions, adapting to the movies without making any concessions to them, and one slightly softer version, couching that distinctive voice in a more familiar caper format. On this evidence, one would say that Mamet would be best advised to stay with the home, and the community of attitudes and behaviour, that looks as solid a structure in the cinema as it has been in the theatre.—*Richard Combs.*

The Postman Always Rings Twice (18)

May 5-7 (See Calendar for times)

For his first screenplay, Mamet found himself presented with an embarrassment of riches in James M. Cain's slim but comprehensive testament to human desire. The story of Cora, the hopeful beauty who went to California and wound up nowhere, in the Twin Oaks roadside tavern, of Nick, her Greek husband, who is staking an immigrant's claim to the New World, and Frank the drifter, who wants nothing, but knows a good thing, in Cora, when he can't avoid it, is made for an expert in transactional behaviour like Mamet. In his view, it's a tale that could be read either locally ('Cain's is a beautiful vision of the country in 1933. It's not picturesque or sentimental.... It's about killing and screwing and betraying each other—and under all this very cynical vision is a crying need for human contact in a bad, bad world') or universally (It's a 4,000-year-old story: the aging man with the young wife, who wants to precipitate some violence, sexuality, regeneration, and so takes in a younger, more virile stranger to their house').

Given so much material that might have been of his own devising, Mamet not surprisingly stays largely faithful to Cain, working within the story as given but opening out its various episodes as a series of Mamet playlets. There's the courtship of glances and mocking challenge between Frank (Jack Nicholson) and Cora (Jessica Lange), ending in coitus on the kitchen table, and proceeding through the gradually dawning, but barely voiceable, realisation that Nick will have to be killed. There's the funny-sad drama of Nick (John Colicos), looking for a friend and handyman in Frank, proof that he means it when he conjoins the Greek and American flags in his brave new neon sign for the Twin Oaks Tavern. And above all, there are the complications attendant on the murder trial, with a legal eagle pulling off a typical Mamet scam by playing one insurance company against another and getting Cora off scot-free. Frank never stands trial, and thereby hangs the second half of Cain's tale, another reason for Mamet's admiration: 'Just when other books would have ended, this begins. It's what happens *after* the murder that's the interesting part'.

One thing that has been dropped from Cain is the final turn of poetic justice that gives the book its title, a scam, as it were, on the part of Fate. If

THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE

this would have fitted well enough in Mamet's scheme of things, it perhaps wouldn't have in director Bob Rafelson's. Successful lyrical or even promising unions between men and women (where women are present at all) aren't a feature of Mamet's work. But for Rafelson, the footloose and socially ambitious energies combined in Frank and Cora would have been a suggestive metaphor for America, and the tragic ending of that promise gives the story a proper shape, whatever Cain and Mamet might have to say about the legal ramifications to follow.—*Richard Combs.*

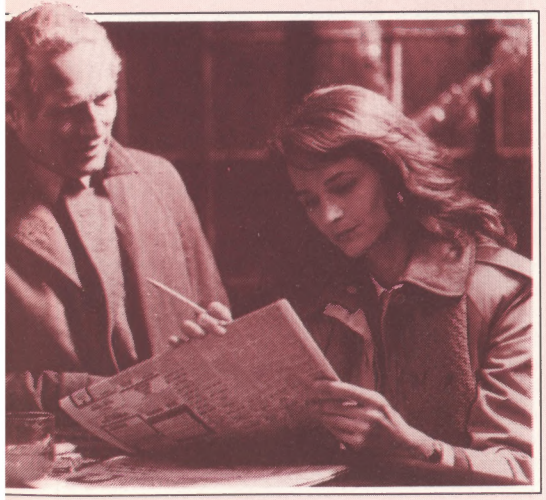
Director: Bob Rafelson. U.S.A., 1981.
Starring: Jack Nicholson, Jessica Lange.
Colour. 121 mins.

The Verdict (15)

May 4 (6.15 & 8.30p.m.)

For a playwright, and now a film-maker, whose world is recognised as that of the gangster and the con-artist, and whose characteristic plot is a scam for a Chekhovian company of players, David Mamet took an interesting sideways step in his second screenwriting assignment. The world of *The Verdict* is that of the law and medicine, where conflicts of interest come with ethical price tags, and if their are winners and losers, they are certified so by the highest codes of society rather than the law of the jungle. *Plus ça change*, the cynical might say, *plus c'est la même chose*: the plot of the *The Verdict* might still be described as a kind of scam, and its principal

THE VERDICT



players as con artists who use the trappings of conscience as a come-on.

To begin with, its hero, Boston attorney Francis G. Galvin (Paul Newman), is the most unashamed hustler, an ambulance chaser who will slip the director of a funeral home a little something in order to pass among the mourners and offer his card along with his sympathies. Frank is shortly offered a better deal, a medical malpractice suit which promises an easy out-of-court settlement with a local hospital which rendered a woman comatose with an anaesthetic given to her during labour. Frank needs the money, but as he realises after a visit to his insensitive client, he needs something more—his dignity and honour back—and he decides to take the case to court. This will pit him against a lawyer whose skill at all the tricks of the trade, whose civilised practice of the law of the jungle, has earned him the nickname of the 'Prince of Darkness' (a quaintly bow-tied James Mason, a villain with all the lethal graces of perfidious Albion).

The appellation, the playful hint of a Manichean struggle, of the divinities willy-nilly engaged (the offending hospital is after all run by a Catholic archdiocese), is part of the game in *The Verdict*. But the twist in the tale here is also to be taken seriously. It could be said that the stakes in any Mamet 'con' are, at bottom, serious, a matter of spiritual as well as monetary ascendancy. But Frank Galvin's struggle for redemption is a tale told by an old-fashioned moralist, one who was perhaps always waiting to come out of the closet. Mamet's most recent play, *Speed-the-Plow*, is a fable of success vs. integrity in Hollywood of a kind thrashed out by Clifford Odets in a 50s play like *The Big Knife* (as is said of the hero of that piece, Galvin is trying to 'win a blessing'. In Sidney Lumet, it has found a director very much attuned to the values and conflicts of the same period, and who brings together the courtroom and the religious drama (abetted by the photography of Andrzej Bartkowiak, who makes even the lights of a pinball machine glow like stained glass) with thumping moral conviction and pleasing dramatic ambiguity.—*Richard Combs.*

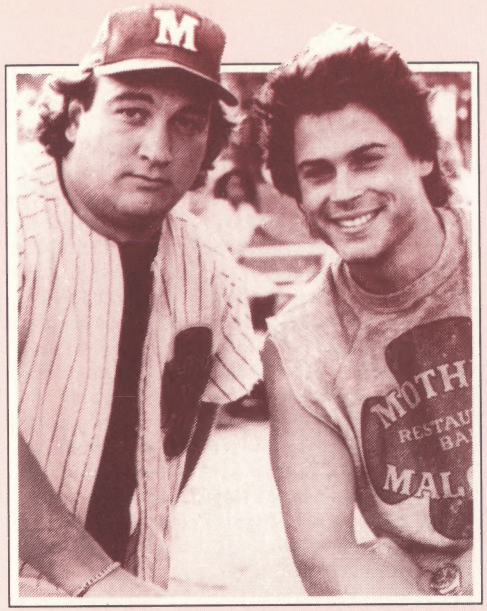
Director: Sidney Lumet. U.S.A., 1982.
Starring: Paul Newman, Charlotte Rampling.
Colour. 128 mins.

"About Last Night..." (18)

May 12, 13 (See Calendar for times)

"About Last Night..." is the only Hollywood adaptation of a Mamet play to date. It's based on the

"ABOUT LAST NIGHT..."



1976 two-acter *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* (the title was changed for the film in fear of an American media boycott on advertising), a sharp comedy about young single people of the permissive era. The four main characters move in circles where the one-night-stand is a way of life and commitment in relationships is considered a life-long prison sentence. Danny (Rob Lowe) and Debbie (Demi Moore) have a casual sexual relationship which threatens to develop into something more, much to the disgust of their friends Joan (Elizabeth Perkins) and Bernie (Jim Belushi). In the ensuing battle of the sexes, Mamet's characters construct an emotional smokescreen out of verbal clichés and self-consciously ironic utterances.

'Mamet's dialogue perfectly expresses the emotional wasteland concealed behind the caustic, wisecracking surface, the flippantly voiced fear of involvement which results in fail-safe sexual banter ("I'd like you to stay *if* you want to..."). The lack of communication between sexual partners is emphasised by the tools of Danny's well-worn seduction routine—stereo headphones for two. But even without headphones, he and Debbie are unable to bridge the gap.

"Mamet's bitter pill has been sugared by this film adaptation, which supplies an optimistic ending completely at odds with the pessimism inherent in the play's theme. Much of the "opening-out" seems arbitrary, consisting of romantic montages of the lovers wandering hand-in-hand by the seashore or canoodling in various locations to musical accompaniment. All four central performances are excellent, however—Rob Lowe at last proves himself to be more than just a pretty Bratpack face, and Elizabeth Perkins makes an impressive film début as Joan.'—*Anne Billson*/Monthly Film Bulletin.

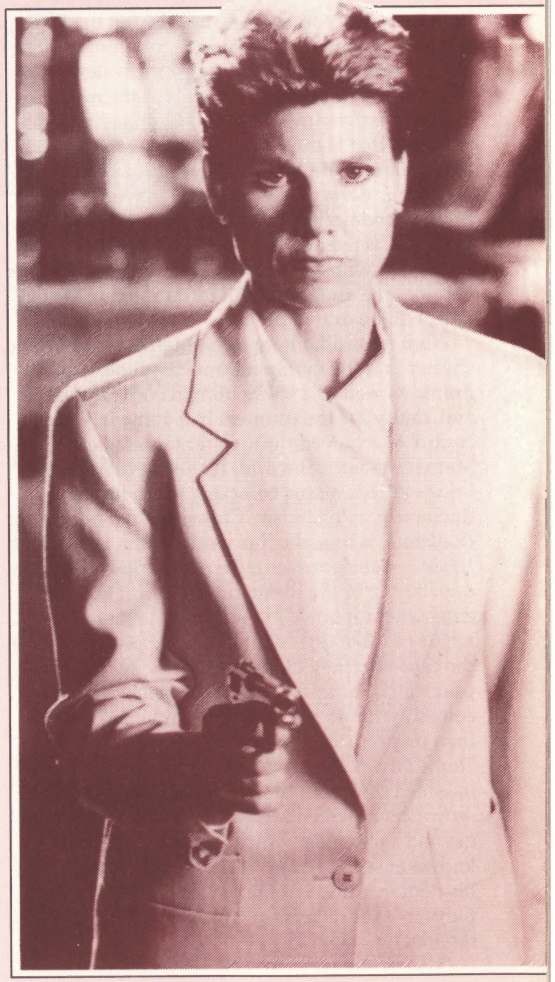
Director: Edward Zwick. U.S.A., 1986.
Starring: Rob Lowe, Demi Moore.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 113 mins.

House of Games (15)

May 11 (3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.)

David Mamet's first film as both writer and director is about an elaborate con trick that builds up

HOUSE OF GAMES



HOUSE OF GAMES

both forwards and backwards through the film, until it is finally revealed as an ambitious and creative enterprise in its own right, equivalent to the film itself. One might even say that the methods of play are the same in both enterprises: within a situation that is carefully prepared, where the environment, the 'script' and the required behaviour is very familiar to the players, something is undertaken involving risk and challenge, the unexpected and the unpredictable, so that the person for whose benefit it is all being staged (the heroine/the audience) will be tempted to participate, will be drawn in.

What is familiar here is the Mamet world of the shyster and the manipulator, a psychological drama as well as a scam: human curiosity, greed and vanity are the counters in a game in which control is achieved through fantasy. This is Mamet's theatrical world, featuring players he brings with him as a company and a family (including wife Lindsay Crouse). What is new, the challenge, is to make this work in film terms, and *House of Games* proves to be a remarkably smooth dovetailing of the theatrical-rhetorical and the cinematic-minimal. To the former belongs the hustle of Mike (Joe Mantegna), ace practitioner of the card-sharping House of Games, who meets psychiatrist Margaret Ford (Crouse) when she comes to him to help a heavily indebted patient, then proceeds to draw her deeply into his world. To the latter belongs the guarded, deadpan mode in which their courtship is played out -- a double seduction in which Mike proffers the kind of danger and excitement which Margaret has only known at second-hand through her work, and by his demonstration of the psychological clues and ploys in gamesmanship which pique her as a professional in the field.

In the process of amalgamating his own world with cinema, Mamet wins what might be called -- cf. the shyster lawyer of *The Verdict* -- 'a blessing'. In its picture of complulsive behaviour, in its sleek surfaces which give the most aberrant acts, and the drawing together, the need for each other, of two diametrically opposed personalities, the look of a logically constructed puzzle, it could be called Hitchcockian. But this is achieved by someone without a filmic portfolio, who probably never considered Hitchcock and was certainly not trying (*à la* Brian De Palma) to ape his stylistic tricks. Think of *Strangers on a Train*, or more closely, *Marnie*, with its similar compulsions and games of control given a different twist by sexual politics. There it was the repressed, controlling Sean Connery character who battened on to the con artist Tippi Hedren ('playing doctor', as she put it) and by force of will effected a kind of cure. Here it is the con artist who retains control, until the repressed, morbidly fascinated doctor flips out, asserting control in the only way available to a scorned, humiliated woman.—*Richard Combs.*

Director: David Mamet. U.S.A., 1987.
Starring: Lindsay Crouse, Joe Mantegna.
Colour. 101 mins.

The Untouchables (15)

May 12-14 (See Calendar for times)

David Mamet on Al Capone, Eliot Ness, Chicago, Prohibition, and the legacy of organised crime in America should have been not only the perfect package, but the occasion for a revitalising of the gangster movie. In the event, the film is effective in flashes, in its set-piece bravura, almost for its wilful defying not only of history but of gangster convention—Ness disposes of his arch-enemy and Capone's lieutenant, Frank Nitti, in a chase over a courtroom roof, the 'untouchable' finally surrendering to personal rage by toppling the hoodlum over the edge, a play-off that visually and morally is more of a vertiginous plunge into Hitchcock. But the film fails either to draw effectively on the rituals of organised crime (as Roger Corman did so brilliantly in *The St. Valentine's Day Massacre*) or to bring its antagonists together in a lethal family romance *à la* Coppola and *The Godfather*.

Ness (Kevin Costner) is not only the outsider in the corrupt world of Chicago law enforcement, but an 'innocent' in the national psychodrama being played out here. He is associated throughout with children, and pulled between the

THE UNTOUCHABLES

embodiment of the temptations of power and ambition in Capone (Robert De Niro) and the sane human values represented by his other mentor, Irish beat cop Malone (Sean Connery). As a schema, this is played out as a series of grand, even explicitly operatic gestures, rather than in the kind of engaged, vernacular idiom one expects of Mamet. The writer was unhappy with the going-over his script received during production, and has reputedly based his Hollywood lampoon in *Speed-the-Plow* on two of the studio executives involved, Ned Tanen and Art Linson.

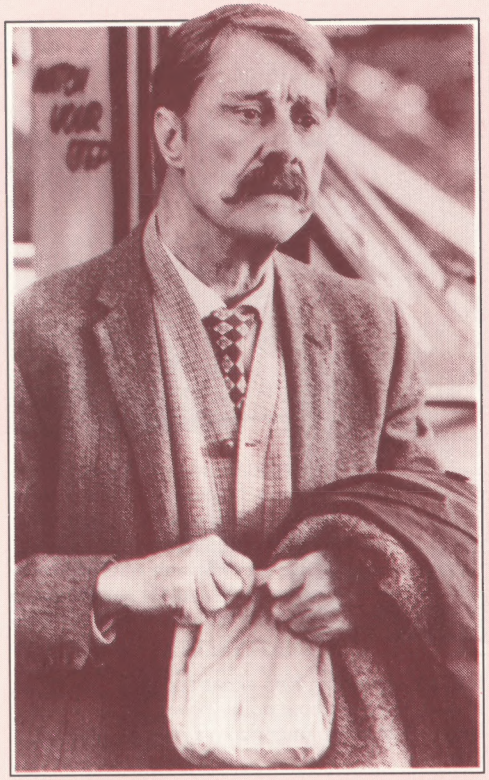
Mamet may not have been too well matched either in his director, Brian De Palma, who drives most scenes towards either opera or the kind of set-piece showiness that occasionally has an enjoyable élan (the 'Western' encounter with bootleggers on the Canadian border), and occasionally expends great effort to little end (the Odessa Steps pastiche for the final shoot-out). It is one of the most revealing signs of De Palma's cinema, and must have been one of the most frustrating things for Mamet, that the characters themselves become set-pieces. Instead of Capone and Ness being drawn together on a compare-and-contrast, or attraction-repulsion, principle (as the dialogue often seems to be struggling to do), they are pushed into their own grandiloquent corners of the movie. De Niro simply stars in another demonstration of what a star can do to himself -- receding hair, expanded girth -- to make an eye-catching point (power bloats absolutely) that never amounts to a movie.—*Richard Combs.*

Director: Brian De Palma. U.S.A., 1987.
Starring: Kevin Costner, Sean Connery.
Colour. Panavision. Dolby Stereo. 120 mins.

Things Change (PG)

May 5-10, 12-17 (See Calendar for times)

For all its sharply realised characters, and its deceptively dawdling underworld comedy, *Things Change* unavoidably exemplifies the problems of the 'second film', especially where it follows a first film as vivid and fully formed as *House of Games*. The interlocking scams of that film, finally closing on its heroine (and us) to reveal the story from beginning to end to have been one big put-on, has here become a comedy of disguise, which is dependent on the audience being in on the game from the start, in order to enjoy the confusion and discomfiture, the exposure of sham, pomposity and hypocrisy when characters who aren't what they are taken for invade a world with its own self-important codes and rules. Gangsterdom is fair but perhaps easy



game for such fun-poking (still done no better, of course, than in *Some Like It Hot*), and the result doesn't have the *frisson*, the shock of the mating—and mutual conning—of 'under' and 'over' worlds in *House of Games*.

This side of Billy Wilder, though, Mamet makes as neat and enjoyable a fist of the masquerade game as one could wish, drawing on the traditional irony that it is the 'innocent' half of his pair of con men who passes most easily for what he is not (this is also the holy fool, the human *tabula rasa* of *Being There*, or the emperor's new clothes theme as well). Gino (Don Ameche), an elderly shoe-shine 'boy' in Chicago, is one day picked up by two mafiosi because he bears a striking resemblance to a Mafia kingpin about to go on trial for murder. Gino is offered a deal: if he will take the rap, and a stretch in prison, he will be paid enough to retire on the boat that has been his life's dream. To keep him safe until the trial, he is put in the care of a minor mafioso, Jerry (Joe Mantegna), recently in disgrace and so considered fit only for babysitting chores. But Jerry, eager to buff up his own status, and sentimental to show Gino a good time before he goes to jail, takes him for the weekend to Lake Tahoe. There Gino's 'family' resemblance involves them in spiralling complications with the local Mafia and their Chicago connections.

In place of the lethally evolving deceptions of *House of Games*, of course, the comedy of disguise here can only lead in a more sentimental direction: the discovery of real feelings when all disguises (and hence bets) are off. While in Lake Tahoe, Gino strikes up a friendship with another Mafia chieftain (Robert Prosky) based not so much on his own supposed Mafia status as their common feelings as old men. And when push comes to shove, Jerry cannot carry out the order that is the real purpose of the 'deal' with Gino, and ends up throwing in his lot with the old man, letting dreams of boats and a gangster career go by the board. All of which plays fair -- if, given the usual scheme of things in Mamet's Chicago, a little softly -- by the rules of this particular genre. What does misfire is the attempt to match the barbed surprises of *House of Games* with a 'twist' ending that not only fails to convince but undermines the film's premise, by making Gino's imposture unnecessary after all.—*Richard Combs.*

Director: David Mamet. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Don Ameche, Joe Mantegna, Robert Prosky.

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MATINEES AND LATE NIGHTS

Please see the calendar on the back cover for performance times.

RoboCop (18)

May 3-6

Showing here for the first time in the new Dolby Stereo SR sound system, Paul Verhoeven's very funny and violent comic-strip fable imagines a future Detroit where a privatised police force is fighting a losing battle against crime. The solution to the problem is RoboCop, an invulnerable composite of man and robot cobbled together by scientists from the sinister Omni Consumer Products organisation. The device is a triumph for the company until RoboCop's computer programme begins to be affected by the memories and feelings of its human element—the remains of an honest young patrolman who was shot to pieces by a vicious band of criminals.

ROBOCOP

In this, his first fully-fledged Hollywood movie, Dutch director Verhoeven goes all out to shock and amuse a large American audience. The whole film can in fact be seen as a caricature of modern America and its media; and nothing in *Broadcast News* can match *RoboCop*'s concept of an appalling three-minute TV world news, with its placid anchor-persons and its commercial breaks for products such as 'Nukem' ('the explosive family game'). The film's black humour is even capable of exploiting to effect the old joke about machines turning on their masters, as demonstrated in a savagely funny sequence where a lumbering mechanical giant is proudly introduced to the management as the future shape of law enforcement and proceeds to gun down a company executive in a disastrous demonstration of its powers. Humour and violence are employed to lethal effect throughout the film, which makes excellent use of fast-moving visuals and thunderous sound effects. Overall, Verhoeven proves surprisingly successful at playing the current Hollywood game of mixing film genres. In *RoboCop*, fiction, cop movie conventions and *Rambo*-style adventure are combined with caustic social commentary to make for an exhilarating entertainment.

Director: Paul Verhoeven. U.S.A., 1987.
Starring: Peter Weller, Nancy Allen.
Colour. Dolby Stereo SR. 102 mins.

The Postman Always Rings Twice (18)

May 5-7

See under David Mamet season for notes.

The Untouchables (15)

May 12-14

See under David Mamet season for notes.

"About Last Night..." (18)

May 12, 13

See under David Mamet season for notes.

Dead Ringers (18)

May 17-21

The Canadian director David Cronenberg first established his reputation with such low-budget shockers as *Shivers*, *The Brood* and *Scanners*. The visceral imagery and outrageous stories of these early movies had an obvious appeal to fans of horror and science-fiction. Those who took the trouble to look beyond the gore could also discern a remarkably consistent form of pseudo-science concerned, as one critic noted, 'with the effects of biological and genetic mutations on the human brain and body' The science-fiction and horror genres, with their abilities to accommodate the fantastic and the grotesque, provided Cronenberg with the freedom to explore his peculiar

DEAD RINGERS

obsessions. And as the films developed in terms of ambition and technical sophistication (particularly with *Videodrome* and the very successful remake of *The Fly*), they found larger audiences and received more critical attention.

With *Dead Ringers*, Cronenberg has moved well beyond the confines of the horror movie to produce his most impressive and personal work to date. In terms of content, the material is, if anything, even more repellent than one has come to expect from this film-maker. But the treatment is so controlled and effective that the movie's disturbing power cannot be denied. It's a sombre, nightmarish exploration of a perverse and ultimately destructive relationship between identical twins (both played, thanks to some ingenious photographic trickery, by Jeremy Irons). Elliot and Bev are successful gynaecologists who share a profitable practice in Toronto. At first they come across as quite distinctive personalities, with the smooth-talking Elliot managing the business and flirting with the patients, while the more introverted Bev concentrates on the research which has made both their reputations. As the film develops, though, the close ties between the brothers become more apparent until, at the close, their sense of mutual dependence assumes bizarre, even tragic dimensions.

The terrible predicament of the twins in *Dead Ringers* represents a deliberately extreme (and fictional) case. Like the protagonists of earlier Cronenberg movies, Elliot and Bev's obsession with the limits and peculiarities of the body leads inexorably to their own destruction. Inseparable since childhood, they seem incapable of relating to the outside world except through their professional expertise, which itself develops into a form of alienation or disorder. Significantly, their sexual relationships derive from their jobs as doctors who manipulate women's bodies. They even use their status as identical twins to share a woman who is unaware that she is involved with two men. The woman in question is Claire Niveau (Genevieve Bujold), who is a rather special patient because her uterus has three chambers (another biological anomaly invented by Cronenberg, incidentally). When Bev falls in love with Claire and doesn't want to share her, the bond between the twins is threatened but not broken. Torn between his love of Claire and his fear of separation from Elliot, Bev becomes psychologically disturbed and resorts to drug abuse. In attempting to cure his brother by 'getting back in synch' with his drugged state, Elliot also becomes hooked and the two drift into madness.

By replacing his usual shock tactics with a more imaginative, dream-like style, Cronenberg succeeds in capturing some of the poetic qualities that distinguish the best horror movies. There were hints of such a development in *The Fly*, which managed to generate considerable pathos for its mutating scientist despite the mere sound and fury of the special effects. In *Dead Ringers* the special effects are fewer in number, but, as it were, doubly effective. They allow Jeremy Irons' subtle performances to co-exist and overlap on the screen in such a convincing manner that one is transfixed by Cronenberg's vision, however disturbing it may be.

Director: David Cronenberg. Canada, 1988.
Starring: Jeremy Irons, Genevieve Bujold.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 115 mins.

High Spirits *(15)*

May 24-27

Neil Jordan (*Angel*, *The Company of Wolves*, *Mona Lisa*) tries his hand at comedy in this dotty piece of Irish whimsy. Or perhaps one should say Irish-American fantasy, since *High Spirits* tries so hard to cater for the all-important American market that, as one critic noted, 'the producers may have been hoping for something on the order of "National Lampoon's Irish Vacation" with a jigger of *Ghostbusters*.!' (In fairness to Jordan, it should be noted that his version was re-cut by the American backers.) The script has a busload of U.S. tourists arriving at a supposedly haunted Limerick castle where the permanently inebriated and impoverished owner (Peter O'Toole hamming it up quite effectively) attempts to entertain them with an amateurishly staged show featuring trapdoors, flying ghosts, revolving beds and a cast of local stereotypes. Even the Americans aren't impressed by this none too convincing display—until, that is, they begin to witness real ghostly manifestations. At which point the film develops some comic momentum as the guests swap love partners and begin to interact with their ghostly companions.

HIGH SPIRITS

Jordan has said that he 'wanted it to be magical and worldly in the sense that does still exist in Irish mythology and legend'. The sets, locations and special effects are all geared to serve such a project, but Jordan's own script and the starry cast are dispiritingly varied in quality. Perhaps the most successful device in the writer/director's haunted castle is the yarn involving a bride who was murdered by her husband on their wedding night and is doomed to re-enact the death scene each night for two centuries. Daryl Hannah and Liam Neeson are so good in these roles that their eventual pairing off with new American partners doesn't have much impact. Indeed, Hannah makes such a lovely ghost that even the prospect of two centuries of repeat performances would seem preferable to taking up with a love-struck idiot played by Steve Guttenberg. However, the union of Neeson and Beverly D'Angelo is at least funny: it has to take place in the spirit world because, forgetting how insubstantial ghosts can be, the over-eager woman at one point runs straight through Neeson's arms and plunges to her death from one of the castle's high windows.

Director: Neil Jordan. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Peter O'Toole, Steve Guttenberg, Daryl Hannah.
Colour. Dolby Stereo SR. 96 mins.

Die Hard *(18)*

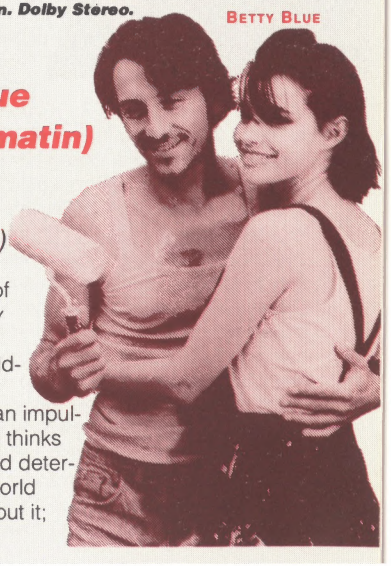
June 2, 3 (11.15p.m. only)

John McTiernan's *Die Hard* is what used to be called a straightforward action movie before Hollywood rendered such categories next to useless by mixing or cross-breeding its old forms to develop what one might describe as today's brand of 'mutant' movie. McTiernan's earlier film *Predator* pitted Arnold Schwartzenegger against a constantly transmuting alien, thus adding an element of science-fiction to the modern, *Rambo*-style combat movie. *Die Hard* plays variations on a similar formula, with the added ingredients here including borrowings from the disaster movie and fairly indigestible lumps of populist sentiment. One of the most interesting ploys is the unlikely casting of *Moonlighting*'s Bruce Willis as the man of action. He's a much softer combatant than, say Schwartzenegger or Stallone, which is probably why the film doesn't waste any time in showing us his muscles as he demonstrates his prowess at handling an arsenal of deadly weapons. At the same time, Willis retains something of his comic persona, thus adding a sense of vulnerability to the character that simply wouldn't exist if Arnie or Sly were fighting against the same odds. It's a clever piece of casting, and it leaves McTiernan free to concentrate on stage-managing the film's many spectacular set-pieces.

Willis' McClane is a New York cop who's forced to take on a group of European terrorists who have taken over a high-rise office building in Los Angeles. McClane is visiting the building to see his estranged wife and manages to evade the terrorists when they burst in and take all the other occupants as hostages. He spends the rest of the movie dodging and frustrating the terrorists by using all the physical strength and tactical resources he can muster. Little help is forthcoming from outside, except for supportive chats with a fellow cop who believes McClane's version of what is happening inside the sealed building. The film pokes fun at the rule-book tactics of the senior police officer who lays siege to the building, and similar treatment is meted out to two F.B.I. agents who play right into the hands of the terrorists. It so happens that the terrorists' cynical mastermind (Alan Rickman adding to the list of 'quality' English actors appearing as suave, cultivated villains in mainstream Hollywood movies) has issued a bogus demand for the release of terrorist prisoners throughout the world—his real mission is to steal six million dollars worth of negotiable bonds— and anticipates every move by the authorities. But his meticulously planned scheme hasn't taken account of the resourceful McClane...

Director: John McTiernan. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia.
Colour. Panavision. Dolby Stereo.
132 mins.

BETTY BLUE



Betty Blue (37°2 le matin) *(18)*

June 9, 10 (11.15 p.m.)

A dazzling tale of *amour fou*, *Betty Blue* is about an easy-going would-be writer who is swept away by an impulsive beauty. She thinks he's a genius and determines that the world should know about it;

but the frustration of this hope, along with her failure to have a child, topples her reason and prepares the way for a finale of tragic horror. This is Jean-Jacques Beineix's best film to date, far outstripping the achievements of *Diva* and *The Moon in the Gutter*. Here, for the first time, the talented French director manages to harness his bravura style to a strong emotional subject and solid characterisation. The humour and outlandish set-pieces are still present, but there is a greater depth of feeling and sense of control in this funny, sad, erotic and technically brilliant film.

Director: Jean-Jacques Beineix. France, 1986.
Starring: Béatrice Dalle, Jean-Hughes Anglade.
Colour. Subtitles. 120 mins.

Good Morning, Vietnam *(15)*

June 14-18

Loosely based on the real career of Armed Forces Radio DJ Adrian Cronaur, who in 1965 was drafted in to boost the morale of the growing number of American soldiers serving in Vietnam, Barry Levinson's film works best as a vehicle for the comic skills of the remarkable Robin Williams. (After this film and the more recent *Rain Man*, Levinson appears to be developing into an actors' director, which is a disappointment given the wider possibilities promised by the excellent first feature, *Diner*.) Improvising Cronaur's on-air monologues, Williams is brilliantly funny, whether lampooning Lyndon Johnson (he 'called his daughter Lynda Bird because Lynda Dog would have been too cruel') or spicing up a recorded interview with Richard Nixon by asking him how he would describe his testicles ('That they're soft, that they're shallow, that they have no purpose'). Cronaur also replaces the station's staid diet of music with rock'n'roll. He's an instant hit with ordinary soldiers, but the broadcast of a censored news item lands him in trouble with his superiors.

GOOD MORNING VIETNAM

Up to this point the film works very well as a services comedy à la *M*A*S*H*, and Williams' manic performances at the microphone contain interesting hints of the madness of the drugs and rock'n'roll war as captured in Herr's *Despatches* and Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*. Unfortunately,

PARENTS

such qualities soon give way to the introduction of a crass romance and the script's highly suspect depiction of Vietnam and Vietnamese.

Director: Barry Levinson. U.S.A., 1987.
Starring: Robin Williams, Forest Whitaker.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 108 mins.

Parents *(18)*

June 21-25

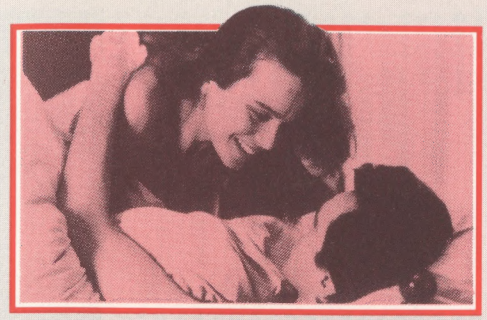
Please see under Main Films for notes.

The Unbearable Lightness of Being *(18)*

June 28-30

American director Philip Kaufman's brave and ambitious adaptation of Milan Kundera's celebrated Czech novel is a powerful story of love and politics set during the 'Prague Spring' of '68. The novel's complex structure and heady philosophising have been simplified, but its spirit permeates every frame of Kaufman's magnificent epic. The main protagonist, Tomas (Daniel Day-Lewis), is a younger and more sympathetic figure in the film. He is the prominent surgeon and compulsive womaniser who strives for 'lightness' in his life. Like his regular lover, Sabine (Lena Olin), he wishes to avoid emotional entanglements. But the lives of both characters are changed through their involvement with Tereza (Juliette Binoche), who clings to Tomas despite his philandering ways.

This love story is set against the background of


THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING

life in Prague before and after Soviet tanks rumbled into the city and destroyed that sense of freedom which had come to symbolise 'socialism with a human face'. The large budget allowed Kaufman to combine archive footage with a spectacular re-staging of the invasion, and the seamless matching of the two is astonishing in its effect. The film also captures the human dimensions of the drama (the performances are uniformly excellent) as well as doing full justice to the overall sardonic tone and erotic elements in Kundera's novel. It is, quite simply, one of the finest American films of recent years.

Director: Philip Kaufman. U.S.A., 1988.
Starring: Daniel Day-Lewis, Juliette Binoche.
Colour. Dolby Stereo. 172 mins.

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VIRGIN (18) 3.00, 5.00, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
3 Wednesday
ROBOCOP (18) 3.00p.m.
VIRGIN (18) 5.00, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
4 Thursday
ROBOCOP (18) 3.00p.m.
Mamet: THEVERDICT (15) 6.15, & 8.30 p.m.
5 Friday
Mamet: THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE (18) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10, 7.00 & 8.50 p.m.
ROBOCOP (18) 11.15 p.m.
6 Saturday
Mamet: THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE (18) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10, 7.00 & 8.50 p.m.
ROBOCOP (18) 11.15 p.m.
7 Sunday
Mamet: THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE (18) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10, 7.00 & 8.50 p.m.
8 Monday
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 3.00, 5.10, 7.00 & 8.50 p.m.
9 Tuesday
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 3.00, 5.10, 7.00 & 8.50 p.m.
10 Wednesday
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 3.00, 5.10, 7.00 & 8.50 p.m.
11 Thursday
Mamet: HOUSE OF GAMES (15) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
12 Friday
Mamet: "ABOUT LAST NIGHT..." (18) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10 & 9.00 p.m.
PATTY HEARST (18) 7.00 p.m.
Mamet: THE UNTOUCHABLES (15) 11.15 p.m.
13 Saturday
Mamet: THE UNTOUCHABLES (15) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10 & 9.00 p.m.
PATTY HEARST (18) 7.00 p.m.
Mamet: "ABOUT LAST NIGHT..." (18) 11.15 p.m.
14 Sunday
Mamet: THE UNTOUCHABLES (15) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10 & 9.00 p.m.
PATTY HEARST (18) 7.00 p.m.
15 Monday
PATTY HEARST (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10 & 9.00 p.m.
16 Tuesday
PATTY HEARST (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10 & 9.00 p.m.
17 Wednesday
DEAD RINGERS (18) 3.00 p.m.
Mamet: THINGS CHANGE (PG) 5.10 & 9.00 p.m.
PATTY HEARST (18) 7.00 p.m.
18 Thursday
DEAD RINGERS (18) 3.00 p.m.
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 7.30 p.m.
19 Friday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 & 7.30 p.m.
DEAD RINGERS (18) 311.15 p.m.
20 Saturday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 & 7.30 p.m.
DEAD RINGERS (18)11.15 p.m.
21 Sunday
DEAD RINGERS (18) 3.00 p.m.
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 7.30 p.m.
22 Monday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 & 7.30 p.m.
23 Tuesday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 & 7.30 p.m.
24 Wednesday
HIGH SPIRITS (15) 3.00 p.m.
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 7.30 p.m.
25 Thursday
HIGH SPIRITS (15) 3.00 p.m.
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 7.30 p.m.
26 Friday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 p.m.
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 7.00 p.m.
CRAZY LOVE (18) 9.00 p.m.
HIGH SPIRITS (15) 11.15 p.m.
27 Saturday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 p.m.
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 7.00 p.m.
CRAZY LOVE (18) 9.00 p.m.
HIGH SPIRITS (15) 11.15 p.m.
28 Sunday
CAMILLE CLAUDEL (PG) 3.00 p.m.
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 7.00 p.m.
CRAZY LOVE (18) 9.00 p.m.
29 Monday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CRAZY LOVE (18) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
30 Tuesday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CRAZY LOVE (18) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
31 Wednesday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CRAZY LOVE (18) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.

JUNE

1 Thursday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
2 Friday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 9.00 p.m.
DIE HARD (18) 11.15 p.m.
3 Saturday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
DIE HARD (18) 11.15 p.m.
4 Sunday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
5 Monday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
6 Tuesday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
7 Wednesday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
8 Thursday
TORCH SONG TRILOGY (18) 3.00, 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.
9 Friday
KAMIKAZE (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
BETTY BLUE (18) 11.15 p.m.
10 Saturday
KAMIKAZE (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
BETTY BLUE (18) 11.15 p.m.
11 Sunday
KAMIKAZE (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
12 Monday
KAMIKAZE (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
13 Tuesday
KAMIKAZE (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
KAMIKAZE (15) 7.00 p.m.
14 Wednesday
GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM (15) 3.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
KAMIKAZE (15) 7.00 p.m.
15 Thursday
GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM (15) 3.00 p.m.
SALAAM BOMBAY! (15) 5.00 & 8.45 p.m.
KAMIKAZE (15) 7.00 p.m.
16 Friday
GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM (15) 3.00 &11.15 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
17 Saturday
GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM (15) 3.00 &11.15 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
18 Sunday
GOOD MORNING, VIETNAM (15) 3.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
19 Monday
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 3.00, 5.15, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
20 Tuesday
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 3.00, 5.15, 7.00 & 9.00 p.m.
21 Wednesday
PARENTS (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
22 Thursday
PARENTS (18) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
23 Friday
PARENTS (18) 3.00 & 11.15 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
CHOCOLAT (15) 7.00 p.m.
24 Saturday
PARENTS (18) 3.00 & 11.15 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
CHOCOLAT (15) 7.00 p.m.
25 Sunday
PARENTS (18) 3.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
CHOCOLAT (15) 7.00 p.m.
26 Monday
CHOCOLAT (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
27 Tuesday
CHOCOLAT (15) 3.00 & 7.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 5.15 & 9.00 p.m.
28 Wednesday
THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING (18) 3.00 p.m.
CHOCOLAT (15) 7.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 9.00 p.m.
29 Thursday
THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING (18) 3.00 p.m.
CHOCOLAT (15) 7.00 p.m.
CROSSING DELANCEY (PG) 9.00 p.m.
30 Friday
THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING (18) 3.00 p.m.
LE GRAND CHEMIN (15) 6.15 & 8.30 p.m.

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